

## Message Text

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70

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SCCT-01 DHA-02 /080 W

----- 073611

R 101552Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4432

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMA KO 2270

DAKAR FOR DATT

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ML, UR, MILI, PFOR

SUBJ: SOVIET ACTIVITY IN MALI-THE AIRFIELDS

REF: BAMA KO 2622

1. AS REPORTED REFTTEL, THE SOVIETS ARE SURVEYING AND IMPROVING EXISTING AIRFIELDS IN MALI, PRESUMABLY TO ENABLE LONG-RANGE SOVIET AIRCRAFT TO SUPPORT FUTURE COMBAT FORCES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AS WAS THE CASE DURING ANGOLAN CONFLICT.

2. SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT BE CONSIDERING A SUITABLE WAY TO LET THE MALIANS KNOW THAT THIS SOVIET ACTIVITY DISTURBS US, THE FOLLOWING MIGHT BE USEFUL: THE DEPARTMENT WOULD INSTRUCT THIS EMBASSY TO REQUEST GOM APPROVAL FOR A USG SURVEY OF MALIAN AIRFIELDS. THE RATIONALE WOULD BE THAT THE DATA COLLECTED DURING THE

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DROUGHT-RELATED AIRLIFT HAS PROVED INSUFFICIENT AND

THE US NOW WISHES TO UPDATE ITS INFORMATION ON CERTAIN KEY MALIAN FIELDS--MOPTI, YELIMANE--SO THAT THE USG WOULD BE ABLE TO RESPOND QUICKLY TO ANOTHER DROUGHT EMERGENCY. THE US TEAM COULD CONSIST OF EMBASSY'S DEFENSE ATTACHE (RESIDENT IN DAKAR) AND AN OFFICER FROM HERE IN THE ROLE OF A DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR. OUR PRIMARY INTEREST WOULD BE IN THOSE AIRFIELDS WHERE THE SOVIETS ARE MOST VISIBLE--SUCH AS MOPTI.

3. THE CHARGE VIEWED THE SOVIET COMPOUND AT MOPTI AUGUST 5-6. IT CONTAINS APPROXIMATELY 30-40 AIR CONDITIONED SLEEPING SPACES, ALTHOUGH NO SOVIETS WERE IN EVIDENCE. IN THE MOTOR POOL AREA OF THE COMPOUND THERE WERE SEVEN LARGE TRUCKS WITH A ROUND, TENT-LIKE STRUCTURE SET IN THE BED OF THE TRUCK, PRESUMABLY CONTAINING HEAVY EQUIPMENT OR A MOBILE SHOP. THERE WERE ALSO SIX HEAVY-DUTY NEW DUMP TRUCKS TOWING TRAILERS CONTAINING CANVAS-COVERED EQUIPMENT. OTHER MISCELLANEOUS VEHICLES WERE IN EVIDENCE, AS WELL AS HEAVY EARTH-MOVING EQUIPMENT ON THE MOPTI RUNWAY.

4. A REQUEST FOR A US AIRPORT SURVEY COULD BE PUT TO THE MALIANS WITH A STRAIGHT FACE AND GOOD RATIONALE. IT WOULD ALSO UNDERLINE OUR INTEREST IN SOVIET ACTIVITY IN A WAY THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THOSE WARY OF THE SOVIETS, AND MAKE LIFE A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT FOR THOSE CLOSE TO THE SOVIETS, SUCH AS DEFENSE MINISTER KISSIMA DOUKARA.

5. REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS.  
DAWKINS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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